



**Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2019**

Location: 112 Mystic Street, Arlington Police Department, 2nd Floor Community Room.
Time: 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

In attendance: Kristine Shah, Susan Carp, Ali Carter, Julie Wayman, Heather Barber, Corey Rateau, Len Diggins, Doug Mayo-Wells, Jenny Raitt, Kelly Lynema, Rachael Stark, Mike Rademacher, Linda Butt, Ezekiel Wheeler, Daniel Amstutz, and via phone, Philip Goff.

Absent: Adam Chapdelaine, Darcy Devney

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome and Introductions led by Jennifer Raitt and Daniel Amstutz

Ms. Raitt opened the meeting and welcomed the committee for then turned the meeting over to Dan Amstutz.

Agenda Item 2 - Icebreaker

Mr. Amstutz asked the group members to each share their name, affiliation, and to share a story about how they traveled to elementary school and how they felt about it and what they remember about it. (The group was reminded of the following before the activity: a) Don't feel obliged to share something they were not comfortable sharing; and b) the memory could be later than elementary school (through middle/high school) if there is a better memory/anecdote they have.)

Agenda Item 3 - Purpose of the STPAC and Goals of the Planning Process

Mr. Amstutz discussed the meeting objectives, the purpose of the committee, and the goals of the planning process.

The following meeting objectives were reviewed:

- Learn more about other STPAC members.
- Learn more about the purpose and goals of STPAC
- Inform the development of the Sustainable Transportation Plan

The purpose of the committee was reviewed:

- 1) Assist in reviewing the RFP
- 2) Help with the selection of the consultant for the project
- 3) Weigh in on the planning process
- 4) Provide background information and experience
- 5) Review drafts of documents
- 6) Help guide policy recommendations
- 7) Attend outreach meetings
- 8) Bring people to outreach meetings/forums
- 9) Help communicate the plan process and outcomes

Primary goals of the plan were reviewed with the group:

- Build on the 2015 Master Plan

- Analyze existing conditions
- Develop a 20-year vision for transportation in Arlington
- Create a measurable implementation plan that prioritizes projects, programs, and policies to achieve the vision
- Focus on ALL aspects of mobility in Arlington: walking, biking, public transit, driving, micro-mobility, emerging technologies

In order to develop this plan, a consultant will be hired, and a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released in the coming weeks for this purpose. The Town has a budget of \$80,000 for this project.

Mr. Amstutz also explained this process is not meant to focus on a specific intersection or project, nor will this group be designing a street or crafting one specific policy. This process is to develop a plan and vision for where we want to go and how we will take actionable steps to get there.

Mr. Amstutz noted the following elements that have been identified so far that are expected to be incorporated into the plan:

- Shift to sustainable transportation modes (walking, biking, public transit – i.e. low-carbon and high-efficiency)
- Connections to GHG emissions and net zero efforts
- Demographic trends/shifts affecting transportation
- Safety, accessibility, and vision zero efforts
- Quick response tactical interventions
- Emerging & alternative technologies
- Data driven decision making (How data is gathered is important)
- The street as a place for people (and also moving people, not vehicles)
- Electrification of the transportation system
- Safe routes to schools
- Regional connections – cannot solve transportation issues in a vacuum
- Social service transportation connections (for users to remain active, reduce isolation, there were 2,000 additional van rides 2018-2019)
- Curbside space and management
- Public engagement on transportation process and decision making and education

Mr. Amstutz opened up the discussion for committee members to be able to provide feedback on the purpose of the committee, the elements of the plan above, and priorities of the plan. The group provided a variety of responses and suggestions for the goals of the Planning Process:

- Mitigating the effects of climate change
- Highlighting the importance of land use (mixed use, well-managed density)
- Collaboration between/within Town Departments on resources
- Getting people active with the community, reducing isolation, especially for Seniors (25% of the community)
- Other mobility for Seniors
- Supporting economic sustainability, freight, logistics
- Normalizing walking, especially for children
- Weighing convenience vs. safety – making better decisions with data
- Being able to market the plan and transportation options to families from other regions
- How to balance with concerns/complaints of commuters from other municipalities travelling through town – regional impacts and pressures

- Making sure we go to people and meet them where they are
- Utilizing town meeting members as resources

Mr. Amstutz reviewed background resources to be reviewed/ used for informing the plan, which may also include statewide documents like the report of the Commission on the future of transportation, 2019 MassDOT congestion report, and regional documents like the Boston MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Mr. Amstutz asked the group to also identify any other Arlington specific documents that should be considered. This should include broader documents or general knowledge areas that the consultant should have. The group discussed the resources and agreed on the following list:

- 2015 Arlington Master Plan
- Complete Streets Policy & Prioritization Plan
- Arlington Center parking study
- Mass Ave Phase 2 redesign
- Arlington Transportation Assessment Study
- The Koff Report
- TAC Crosswalk guidelines
- TAC traffic calming guidelines
- TAC bike facility design guidelines
- Climate Action Plan & Net Zero plan (in progress/beginning)
- MPO LRTP
- MAPC MetroCommon 2050

Agenda item 4 - Transportation in Arlington – Pair and share exercise

Attendees were asked to pair up with the person next to them to review the following questions for 10 minutes:

- 1) What is your experience with traveling around Arlington?
- 2) What are good aspects of the transportation system?
- 3) What needs improvement?
- 4) How are transportation issues resolved?

The following issues were identified by the group during the pair and share exercise:

- Challenges for the senior population: Council on Aging (COA) has a menu of services, but still has gaps/challenges (ex. after business hours and same day requests). Could there be more broad based support?
- People love access to transit in Arlington
- Gridlock during commutes, signals/light timing needs improvement
- Gridlock around schools during drop off/pick up, lots of cut-through traffic on residential streets
- Good transit access is important throughout the town, not just on Mass. Ave.
- Need improvements to crosswalk visibility
- The sacredness of parking spaces makes parking conversations difficult
- Snow clearance on sidewalks, need enforcement of this
- Bikeway and the 77 bus route are great but would like better public transit expansion to Lexington
- Better parking management in business districts
- Updating pedestrian infrastructure in key locations, tension between outdoor cafes and pedestrians

- Take an 8-80 approach (build cities safe and accessible with great quality of life for children 8 years old and seniors 80 years old and everyone will be served)
- Cyclists on sidewalks – rethink the curb, think about safe bike areas for kids
- Hazards to pedestrians – plan for actual behavior, not just for the rules
- Pedestrian wait times at signals limits walkability
- Change in bus clumping, deters ridership
- Inconsistency/unreliability of bus and Red Line is also a deterrent to using public transportation
- Need better support for traffic enforcement
- Ride share drivers using bus stops and bike lanes is a problem
- Dockless bike share is good but needs designated parking areas
- Good job integrating multiple modes given constraints; congestion is a regional problem
- Need to connect our different systems
- Really need to prioritize infrastructure investment – limited funds and a lot of projects
- Impediments to walking; identify hidden rewards to walking (time with family, etc.)
- Sidewalks as on call spots for bus pickup
- Maintenance of stops, including snow removal
- Collaboration is a key part of addressing transportation issues

Agenda item 5 - Regular meeting schedule

Mr. Amstutz noted the expected near-term schedule for the planning process:

- 1) Review draft RFP – need 2-3 volunteers from the committee to assist: Rachel Stark, Len Diggins, and Phil Goff volunteered
- 2) Advertise for bids on the project by mid-October
- 3) Consultant interviews in November
- 4) Expect to select a consultant by Thanksgiving/end of November
- 5) Selected consultant attends STPAC meeting in December
- 6) Work begins based on consultant's proposed/expected timeline

The next full monthly meetings are expected to be during the following weeks:

- October 21
- November 18
- December 16

Mr. Amstutz will send out a survey to request availability from the committee during those weeks.

Agenda item 6 - Closing and Next Steps

- Send poll for meeting dates
- Check with Corey Rateau about room availability
- Send MPO LRTP link to the group

Meeting Adjourned